

Lake Shelbyville

FISH & WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA



Illinois
Department of
Natural Resources

Lake Shelbyville Fish And Wildlife Management Area

Located along the Kaskaskia and West Okaw rivers near Sullivan, the Lake Shelbyville Fish and Wildlife Management Area offers some of the best hunting, river fishing and nature study opportunities in the state. The two areas contain more than 6,000 acres of mixed habitats, including forests, prairies, restored grasslands, brush, wetlands, rivers, streams and cropland. All are situated in the upper reaches of the 34,000-acre Lake Shelbyville project area.

The Lake

Lake Shelbyville is a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers facility, built as part of a general comprehensive plan for the development of the Kaskaskia Basin for flood control, recreation, water supply, and fish and wildlife conservation. The 11,000-acre lake and its surrounding uplands form a scenic background for a variety of outdoor recreational activities.

At normal pool, Lake Shelbyville averages 16 feet in depth, with a maximum depth of 67 feet. Islands, coves, peninsulas and inlets create 250 miles of picturesque, wooded shoreline. It extends nearly 17 miles from the dam at Shelbyville to its limits above Sullivan and Bethany. Development of the shoreline has been intentionally kept to a minimum, allowing uninterrupted views of the lake's natural features throughout its length.

The Site

The Shelbyville Fish and Wildlife Area is composed of two separate units. The Kaskaskia (eastern) Unit covers 3,700 acres. The West Okaw (western) Unit contains about 2,500 acres. These are managed primarily to promote diverse habitats so that a wide variety of wildlife species are accommodated, and related recreational opportunities are afforded the general public. Because of its focus on hunting and fishing, the area has no camping, picnicking or day-use facilities.

The Inn at Eagle Creek, one of the Midwest's most modern resorts and conference centers, is located within Eagle Creek State Park, just outside of Findlay. For information about the resort, call (800) 876-3245.

Natural Features

Oak, hickory and hard maple flourish in the uplands, while cottonwood, sycamore, soft maple and willow dominate the lowlands. This variety of species creates spectacular scenery as the foliage changes from green to the vivid reds, oranges, purples and yellows of a showy Illinois' fall.

Prairie plants can be found along railroad paths, rural roads and in abandoned fields. Of special note is the unique, three-and-one-half acre Hill Prairie. This relic prairie jewel has been managed back to nearly its natural state. Located near the extreme southeast corner of Kaskaskia Unit, the area is known to harbor



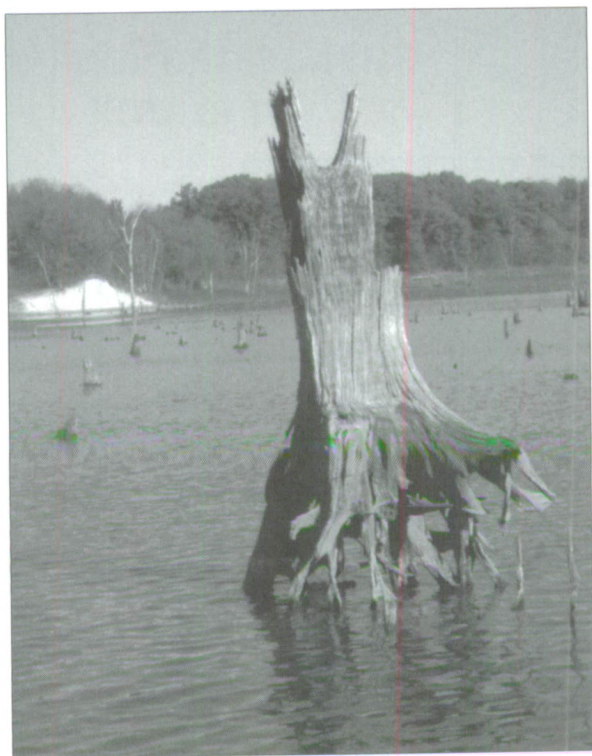
over 50 species of native plants. Its summer bloom of purple and yellow cone flowers is, by itself, worthy of a visit to the site. An additional wealth of native wildflowers can be found in woodland understories, along ditch bands, and in old field settings throughout the area.

More than 200 species of birds have been documented on the site since listing began in 1975. Seasonal displays featuring shorebirds, wading birds, waterfowl, wood warblers, raptors and grassland and shrub habitat songbirds are a birdwatcher's delight. Resident game birds and game mammals are plentiful, offering the hunter opportunities not readily available in the intensely farmed areas dominating off-site landscapes. Bobwhite quail, ring-necked pheasant, mourning dove, woodcock, turkey, cottontail rabbit, white-tailed deer, fox and gray squirrel, raccoon, muskrat, otter, opossum and mink are found in good numbers.

Wildlife Management

Portions of the area are managed under a farm lease program to promote upland wildlife habitat and to demonstrate the potential for producing wildlife on farm lands. Site personnel supplement natural habitats with tree and shrub plantings, native grass seedings, specialty food crop production and succession control.

Wetland and marshland habitat management are emphasized in and around the five waterfowl management areas. By controlling the depth and duration of water on an area, significant amounts of natural moist soil plants are produced. These, in turn, are used to provide breeding, courtship, feeding and staging areas for wetland wildlife species including rails, snipe, herons, shorebirds, cormorants, ducks and geese.



Boat Access

Hunters and fishermen will find six small boat launching facilities conveniently located in the wildlife areas. Visitors with bigger craft are advised to use the larger access areas offered at marinas, state parks or Corps of Engineers sites.

Fishing

The Kaskaskia and West Okaw rivers provide excellent stream fishing for walleye, white bass, crappie and channel catfish. Boats are welcome on the rivers, but the corridors are designated no wake areas.

Largemouth bass, bluegill, redear and channel catfish are found in the six ponds scattered around the management units. These ponds range from 0.5 to 1.7 acres in size.

Hunting

Hunters are welcome throughout the area, except where hunting is prohibited within 100 yards of residences and in other areas as posted. The site offers ample opportunities for rabbit, pheasant and quail in upland settings. Fox and gray squirrels are plentiful in the timbered areas. Deer are common and can be taken with shotgun, bow or muzzle-loading rifle. Dove are seasonally abundant, especially in sunflower fields planted on site. Woodcock and common snipe are present in huntable numbers during migrations.

Waterfowl management and hunting are feature programs on both management units. Four subimpoundments provide excellent mid-migration habitat and quality walk-in or boat waterfowl hunting opportunities. Hunters do need to be aware that during the first few days of the season, duck and goose hunting sites are allocated by daily drawings. Contact the site office for details and rules.

Trapping

Trapping is allowed by special permit only in designated furbearer management units. A drawing for these permits is held annually during October. Trappers must report their take to the area headquarters at the end of the season.

Trails And Nature Study

The Kaskaskia and West Okaw units offer developed nature trails that highlight the habitats found there. These trails provide visitors an opportunity to leisurely wander through natural settings that present different plant and animal communities at every turn. Whether a spring walk to look at wildflowers or marvel at woodland warblers, or a fall hike to take in leaf color, these trails showcase some of central Illinois' finest outdoor spectaculars.

This area is governed by Federal Regulations (Title 36—Parks, Forest and Memorials) and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Administrative Rules. Copies of these are available at agency offices on the lake. For additional information on this site contact:

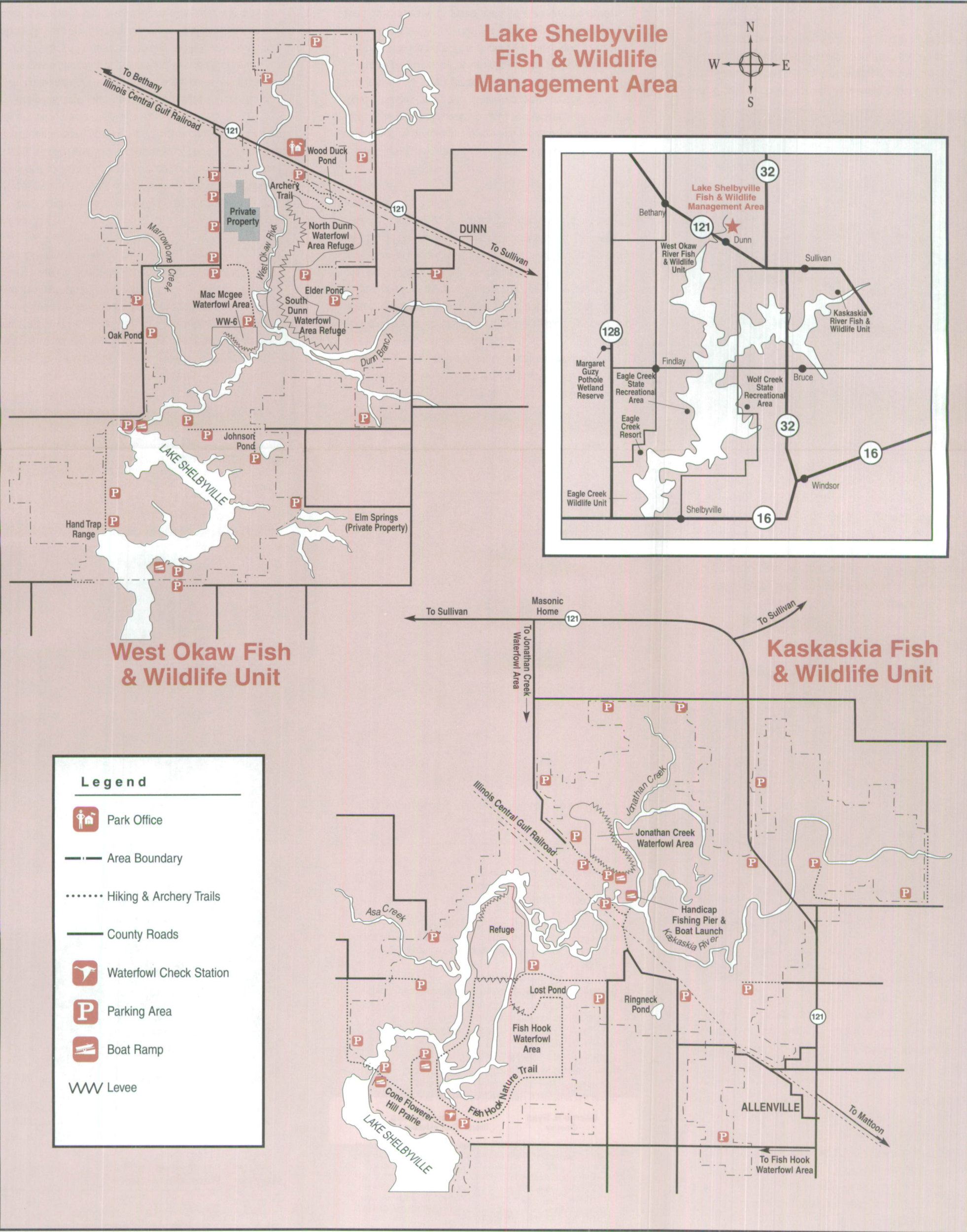
Site Superintendent, Shelbyville Fish and Wildlife Management Area, R. #1 Box 42-A, Bethany, IL 61914 or call (217) 665-3112.

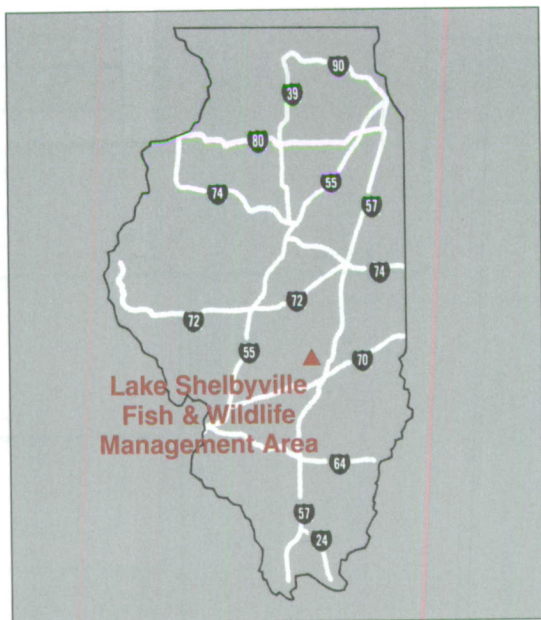
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Lake Shelbyville Fish & Wildlife Management Area

R.R. 1, Box 42-A

Bethany, IL 61914, 217-665-3112

- While groups of 25 or more are welcome and encouraged to use the park's facilities, they are required to register in advance with the site office to avoid crowding or scheduling conflicts.
- At least one responsible adult must accompany each group of 15 minors.
- Pets must be kept on leashes at all times.
- Actions by nature can result in closed roads and other facilities.
- We hope you enjoy your stay. Remember, take only memories, leave only footprints.
- For more information on state parks, write to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Office of Public Services, 524 S. Second St., Springfield, IL 62701-1787, call (217) 782-7454 or visit its website at <http://dnr.state.il.us>.
- For more information on tourism in Illinois, call the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs' Bureau of Tourism at 1-800-2CONNECT.
- Deaf and hearing-impaired individuals may call the Department of Natural Resources' TTY number, (217) 782-9175, or use the Ameritech Relay Number 1-800-526-0844.

Rod R. Blagojevich
Governor

Joel Brunsvold
Director

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